



Bent's Fort Ledger

Fall
2007

Volunteers Help Make the Santa Fe Trail Encampment "One of the Best"

By Greg Holt

More than 500 visitors strolled through the river camps and fort during the Santa Fe Trail Encampment October 6-7th. Forty-four volunteers from 4 states and park staff performed daily camp and life work as a trader, trapper, hunter, blacksmith, carpenter, Plains Indian, teamster, domestic and Mexican laborer. New this time was the representation of the more noted travelers to Bent's Fort in the 1830s and 1840s including Susan Magoffin, Frederick Wislizenus, Thomas Farnum, Lewis Garrard, Matt Field, George Ruxton, Marcus Whitman, and Francis Parkman. Other associated representations included Laurence Lovejoy, Kit Carson, John Smith, Delaware Indian, Mexican Cibolero, and Tete Rouge. Visitors could view a period map of each one's travels in the fort exhibit room. The volunteer's spontaneous approach to visitors was most effective. It was very good to see volunteers in first person role, spontaneously interacting with the visitors and others.

The Saturday evening program featured period music and historical character role presentations of the historic visitors to Bents' Fort. Fiddle and banjo music and song by Rex Rideout and Tom Karnuta introduced each noted traveler. The visitors, including the children seemed to thoroughly enjoy the drama and interaction with each new person and his portrayal. An older gentleman, who traveled from South Dakota just for the event, gave some very sincere compliments. You should be proud for a job well done! The Park would



like to thank all those who made the event possible:

Plains Indians

Martin Knife Chief
Gale Beckman
Eunice Petramala
Jim Phillips
Phyllis Keas
Judi Hudson

Domestics

Jerri Spellman
Kay Cynova
Sarah Dack
Jessica Marlow
Judi Brown
Barbara Ingles
Jessica Marlow
Gale Goth

Mexican Laborers

Joe Frausto
Eli Frausto
Julie Jacobs
Peggy Warren

Craftsmen

Randy Dack
Jim Harsh

Trapper/Hunters

Tom Karnuta
Mike Moore
Jim Sebastian
Brandon Dack

Tete Rouge /Teamster

Mark Berry

Traders

John Luzader
Ed Duncan
Henry Crawford
Don Keas

Marcus Whitman

Don Worthington

Laurence Lovejoy

Leon Davis

Francis Parkman

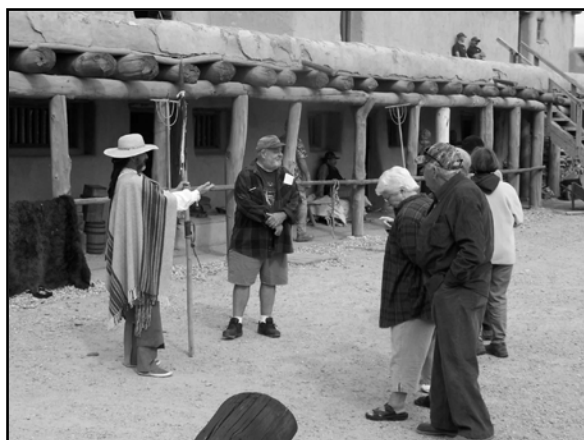
Don Headlee

Susan Magoffin

Lara Erickson

Matt Field

Rex Rideout



Mexican Cibolero

Manuel Lopez

Newspaper Correspondent

Wayne Stroot

Lewis Garrard

Michael Schaub

John Smith 1846

Sam Pisciotta

Farnum Expedition

Don Erickson
Bob Elsloo
Richard Lohsen
Paul Imhos

George Ruxton

J.R. Thompson

Kit Carson

John Carson

Wislizenus

Don Troyer

Wicked Weed Award!

by Courtney Moore

This month's wicked weed award goes (once again) to the infamous Salt Cedar. Formally this rogue goes by the name of *Tamarix parviflora* and *T. ramosissima* and is plaguing parks, historic sites, farms and grasslands across the West. Bent's Fort has been involved in an ongoing battle to eradicate this plant and its insatiable appetite for our precious water resources. Perhaps some of you have been fortunate enough to see the Bent's Fort program in operation and noticed that there have been fewer tamarisk intrusions on the Arkansas banks. This endeavor to restore the landscape of Bent's Fort has been very visually rewarding.

On the weekend of September 29, 2007-September 30, 2007 two employees from Bent's Fort NHS joined the Volunteers for

Outdoor Colorado to remove tamarisk and Russian olive from the banks of the Purgatoire River at the restored town of Boggsville, CO. Approximately 60 people volunteered to help remove the invasive plants for the weekend by means of mechanical and chemical treatment. On Saturday evening, presentations were given by Boggsville historians, along with a period style dinner.

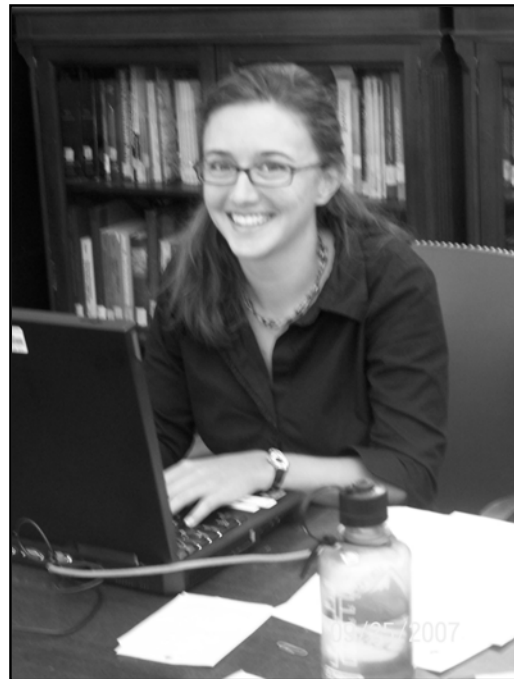


It is estimated that the VOC removed roughly 8-10 acres of tamarisk and Russian olive. We are pleased to see that citizens from around the state are concerned not only with the natural beauty of Colorado but with its historic sites as well. We hope this critical undertaking will continue.

New Intern Arrives *by Courtney Moore*

Courtney Moore, the new intern, has arrived at Bent's Fort. She is working for Fran Pannebaker in natural resources. She hails originally from Concord, New Hampshire, and is here in La Junta, CO until the middle of December.

Courtney's degree from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts is in environmental studies with a focus in water issues, and music. She realizes this is a strange combination and yes, she has played music outdoors. If you happen to see her around the fort please feel free to say hello and if you are in luck she might favor you with her impression of a Boston accent.



Plans in Place for Revegetation near Fort!

By Courtney Moore

The natural resources division at Bent's Old Fort has begun planning the revegetation of an 8-acre former gravel parking lot near the fort. An environmental and cultural resources assessment for the site is currently being written. This document will be available online once finished.

The plot will be reseeded with grass species native to the area. The project is anticipated to start next spring and any disruption will be of short duration. It is hoped that this

project will help improve the view from the fort, giving visitors and volunteers alike a view that blends with native short grass prairie.

Bent's Old Fort Requests Volunteer Sign-up for 2008 Special Events

Plans have been made for the special events at Bent's Old Fort for the year 2008. Most of the events follow the same format and time of year. **The Santa Fe Trail Caravan**, a 3-½ mile hike for the public behind the oxen pulled Conestoga wagon from Sierra Vista to Timpas, Colorado will take place on **May 10th**. We had over 60 people join us the last years. We plan to have talks about the trail at the end of the hike at the Timpas Picnic area. We will need 2-3 volunteers to ride horse back with a pack animal in tow and to assist with other needs.

The Living History Encampment will be on **June 5th through the 8th**. The training will include a first day of lecture followed by 3 nights and 3 days of intensive first person living history training. Instructors will guide and mentor up to 4 students each in one lifestyle including Topographical Engineers, blacksmithing, carpentry, domestic and laborer work, trapping and hunting, trading and Plains Indian life. Two hours graduate level credit will be available. A Fee will be required for student participation.

We will need about 5 volunteers to assist the **Fourth of July** event. It is a 3-hour event, which will include a parade, speeches, storytelling and acting, some frontier cooking, and games.

Kids Quarters on July 12th will be a half day long with of need of 10 volunteers to help with carpentry, blacksmithing, domestic, laborer, trading, trapping, soldier

and Plains Indian work. We are always in need of new volunteers to assist with this event.

The fall special event this year on **October 11-12th** will be called the **Fur Trade Encampment** and will feature a larger Plains Indian camp, trader and trapper camps. Emphasis will be on getting as much help as possible to represent the culture and life of the Plains Indian. Some effort will be made to get authors and historians for special presentations. Effort will also be made to have a fandango on Saturday night.

The **Holiday Celebration** will be on **December 5th and 6th**. We will have candle light tours both evenings and the regular daytime activities on Saturday. The public interest in this event has kept it going. We usually need about 35 volunteers to make it happen.

As always, we are in need of your comments and suggestions about these and any other possible events. Visitation to events is down and so we hope this advance notice will assist with everyone's plans.

Please let Greg Holt know of your interest in helping with any event. You can reach him by email at greg_holt@nps.gov or by calling 719-384-8938.



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

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